

SARAH R. DRESSER.

JANUARY 28, 1897.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed.

Mr. MEIKLEJOHN, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany S. 915.]

Your Committee on Indian Affairs, to whom Senate bill 915, entitled "A bill for the relief of Sarah R. Dresser," was referred, beg leave to report as follows:

On the 15th of June, 1880, a bill was passed for the ratification of the agreement with the confederated bands of Ute Indians. The agreement was made with the Ute Indians soon after the Meeker massacre, which occurred in 1878, in which the Government agent, N. C. Meeker, and many of his associates were killed and some carried into captivity. Among the victims of the massacre were H. S. and Frank G. Dresser, sons of George and Sarah R. Dresser. The agreement with the Indians provided for their removal to Utah and the payment of certain annuities to them. Out of this amount it was provided that the dependent heirs and next of kin of the victims should be paid certain annual sums, the provision of the statute on this point being as follows:

And out of the portion of said moneys coming to the White River Utes, the United States shall pay annually to the following-named persons during a period of twenty years (if they shall live so long) the several sums, respectively: To Mrs. Arivella D. Meeker, \$500; to Mrs. Josephine Meeker, \$500; to Mrs. Sophronia Price, \$500; to Mrs. Maggie Gordon, \$500; to George Dresser, \$200; to Mrs. Sarah Post, \$500; to Mrs. Eaton, mother of George Eaton, \$200; to the parents of Arthur L. Thompson, \$200; to the father of Fred Shepard, \$200; to the parents of Wilmer Eskridge, \$200.

In all cases where both parents of the victims were living, except in the case of Dresser, the word "parents" was used as the beneficiaries. Evidently the person who drafted this bill did not know that Mrs. Sarah R. Dresser was living, but did know that George Dresser, her husband, was living. George Dresser died on the 16th of April, 1888, and although Mrs. Dresser, the mother of the Dresser boys, who were killed in the Indian massacre, is living yet she is receiving no pension. She is in destitute circumstances, and is dependent upon others for support. The facts are more fully set forth in the letter of Mr. Teller, the affidavits of Mrs. Dresser, her son, Fred S. Dresser, and Hon. Jared L. Brush, who is lieutenant-governor of the State of Colorado, all of which letters are attached hereto as exhibits.

For these reasons we recommend the passage of this bill.

LETTER FROM SENATOR TELLER.

UNITED STATES SENATE,
Washington, D. C., April 20, 1896.

DEAR SIR: I hope you will permit me to call your attention to the bill introduced by myself for the relief of Mrs. Sarah R. Dresser. Mrs. Dresser lost two sons at the Ute massacre, at White River, Colo., in 1878, and up to the time of her husband's death, in 1888, received with him an annuity from the fund set apart for the Indians who were responsible for the massacre. She has failed to receive it since because of an oversight in mentioning her husband by name. Reference to the statute confirming the treaty with the Indians will convince you that it was intended by Congress that Mrs. Dresser should share with her husband the amount provided to be paid to him. You will observe that both parents were included in other cases. I was instrumental in securing this legislation, and can state, of my own knowledge, that the change of phraseology was a mere inadvertence, and I know personally that there was no intention to discriminate against Mrs. Dresser. On the contrary, if there had been any discrimination at all it should have been in favor of Mr. and Mrs. Dresser, for theirs was the only family which lost two of its members by the massacre. I know Mrs. Dresser to be a most deserving and exemplary lady, and hope your committee will see its way clear to correct this mistake, from which she has already suffered too long.

Yours, very truly,

H. M. TELLER.

Hon. R. F. PETTIGREW.

Chairman Committee on Indian Affairs, United States Senate.

In the matter of the bill for the relief of Sarah R. Dresser.

AFFIDAVIT.

STATE OF ILLINOIS, County of Cook, ss:

Sarah R. Dresser, being first duly sworn, on oath deposes and says: I am the widow of George Dresser and the mother of Harry S. Dresser and Frank G. Dresser. My husband, George Dresser, and my said two sons are mentioned in the first section of the act of Congress approved June 15, 1880, providing for a pension of \$200 per annum to my said husband, George Dresser. My said husband departed this life intestate and without property at Greeley, Weld County, Colorado, the place of his residence, on April 16, 1888. For many years prior to his death my husband had been in feeble health, and since his death, as well as before, I have been in feeble health and dependent for living expenses upon the earnings and generosity of my daughter Jessie Dresser, who recently married C. D. Page, and with whom I am now residing at No. 543 55th st., Chicago, Illinois. Until the seventh of June, 1895, I resided with my said daughter at Greeley, Colorado, where I had resided with my husband prior to his death, since the year 1873. My two sons, Harry S. Dresser and Frank G. Dresser, were slain by the Indians at White River massacre in Colorado, in the year 1879. At the time of their deaths Harry S. Dresser was aged twenty-seven years and Frank G. Dresser was aged twenty-one years. My said sons entered the employ of the Government under Indian Agent N. C. Meeker, expressing as their principal reason therefor that they desired to increase their income that they might contribute more liberally to the support of their aged parents. Since the death of my said husband, George Dresser, April 16, 1888, I have been deprived of the pension of \$200 per annum, which said act of Congress approved June 15, 1880, awarded to my said husband, George Dresser. By an unfortunate inadvertence in the drafting of said act of Congress said pension was not made payable to the parents of my said two sons, as was the case with reference to the parents of Arthur L. Thompson and the parents of Wilmer Eskridge, who were slain at the same time and at the same massacre. It seems to me simply an act of justice that this inadvertent error in said act should be corrected, and that I in my widowed condition should receive the same pension which my husband received prior to his death.

SARAH R. DRESSER.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 23rd day of January, A. D. 1896. .

[SEAL.]

W. R. HUMPHRY, Notary Public.

In the matter of the bill for the relief of Sarah R. Dresser.

AFFIDAVIT.

STATE OF COLORADO, *County of Weld, ss:*

Fred. S. Dresser, being first duly sworn, on oath deposes and says: I am the oldest son of George Dresser and Sarah R. Dresser. My age is forty-six years. I reside at Greeley, Weld County, Colorado; my business is engineer of the city waterworks of said city of Greeley. My father, George Dresser, the person mentioned in the act of Congress approved June 15, 1880, as entitled to a pension of \$200 per annum on account of the death at White River Indian massacre of his two sons, Harry S. Dresser and Frank G. Dresser, departed this life intestate and without property at Greeley, Weld County, Colorado, which for many years had been the place of his residence. He left him surviving his widow, my mother, Sarah R. Dresser, as well as three children, viz, my sisters, Sarah E. Dresser and Jessie Dresser, and myself. Prior to his death, my father and mother depended for their livelihood principally on the pension and such assistance as their children were able to give them. At the time of his death my father was sixty-six years old. For many years he had been in feeble health. Since the death of my father, my mother, Sarah R. Dresser, has been dependent for her living expenses principally upon the earnings of my sister, Jessie Dresser, who has been engaged in the business of teaching school at Greeley, Colorado, and was also librarian of the Greeley Public Library, at Greeley, Colorado. My own earnings are required for the expenses of my immediate family. The first section of the act of Congress approved June 15, 1880, provided for pensions on account of the deaths at White River Indian massacre, in addition to pensions to the widow and daughter of Indian Agent N. C. Meeker, as follows:

To Mrs. Eaton, mother of George Eaton, \$200 per annum; to the parents of Arthur L. Thompson, \$200 per annum; to the father of Fred Sheppard, \$200 per annum; to the parents of Wilmer Eskridge, \$200 per annum; "to George Dresser, father of Harry S. Dresser and Frank G. Dresser, \$200 per annum." The mother of said George Eaton was a widow, the father of said Fred Sheppard was a widower. There was absolutely no reason why said act of Congress should not have provided for the pension on account of the death of my two brothers, Harry S. Dresser and Frank G. Dresser, who were slain at said Indian massacre, going to the parents of said Harry S. Dresser and Frank G. Dresser, the same as was done in the death of Wilmer Eskridge and Arthur L. Thompson. The failure of said act of Congress to so provide was due to inadvertence or oversight of the party who drafted the bill. On account of said oversight my mother, though in feeble health and in great need of the continuance of the pension, has been deprived thereof since the 16th day of April, 1888. It is simply an act of justice to my mother, whose two sons lost their lives when in the service of their country, that said pension should be continued during her life. My mother, Sarah R. Dresser, for the last few months has been residing with my sister, Jessie Dresser, now married and residing with her husband, C. D. Page, at 543 Fifty-fifth street, Chicago, Illinois. My brothers, Harry S. Dresser and Frank G. Dresser, who were killed at the White River massacre, at the White River Agency, in Colorado, in the year 1879, were, prior to their death, the principal support of my aged father and mother. My said brothers entered the Government employ under Indian Agent N. C. Meeker, in hope thereby to earn more money, and thus be able to contribute more to the support of their parents.

FRED. S. DRESSER.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 18th day of January, 1896.

[SEAL.]

VERNON MCKELNEY, *Notary Public.*

My commission expires May 13, 1899.

In the matter of the bill for the relief of Sarah R. Dresser.

AFFIDAVIT.

STATE OF COLORADO, *County of Weld, ss:*

Jared L. Brush, being first duly sworn, on oath deposes and says: For twenty-two years and more last past I have resided at Greeley, Weld County, Colorado. I am now lieutenant-governor of the State of Colorado. I have read the annexed affidavit of Fred S. Dresser; I am familiar with the facts therein stated, and of my own knowledge aver that they are all and singular true. For more than twenty years I have been well acquainted with Sarah R. Dresser, and for fifteen years and more prior to

his death was acquainted with George Dresser, mentioned in the first section of the act of Congress approved June 15, 1880. I know that the sons of said George Dresser and Sarah R. Dresser lost their lives while in the service of their country and while faithfully attending to their duties at the White River massacre, at the White River Agency in Colorado, in the year 1879. In my opinion, it is simply an act of justice that the widowed mother of said Harry S. Dresser and Frank G. Dresser should receive the same pension that her husband received prior to his death. Mrs. Dresser and her family have ever been highly esteemed by everyone who know them. Said Harry S. Dresser and Frank G. Dresser were young men of the ages, respectively, of twenty-seven and twenty-one at the time of their unfortunate deaths, and were the principal support of their father and mother.

JARED L. BRUSH.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 20th day of January, A. D. 1896.

[SEAL.]

VERMON MCKELNEY, *Notary Public.*

My commission expires May 13, 1899.